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REMARKS

Claims 1, 8, 15, and 16 have been amended. Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 2, 4, and 6 – 16 are pending in this Application. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1, 8 – 10, 13, 15, and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Romanov U.S. Patent No. 6,434,144. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Applicants' exemplary claim 1 sets forth:

"A method for representing a plurality of addresses in an address table in a communication system, the method comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges;

generating a single address that represents the plurality of addresses by inserting the selected at least one regular expression character in place of the at least one character of the plurality of addresses, thereby generating a group address; and

storing the generated group address in the address table,
whereby a plurality of addresses are represented by a single group address entry in the address table."

The Applicants thus use regular expression characters to replace common portions of addresses to generate a group address. The group address containing the regular expression character is stored in the address table. The regular expression characters are chosen from a

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regular expression syntax capable of representing contiguous and non-contiguous address ranges.

The expressions of group addresses are therefore highly flexible.

In contrast, Romanov discloses a prefix database. The purpose of the prefix database is to aid longest prefix matching of IP addresses. A prefix is “a sequence of bits representing the most significant bits of an IP address, such as the portion of an IP address corresponding to a second-level domain” (Romanov Col. 1 lines 38 – 41.) Romanov refers to these portions of addresses as “continuum” (Col. 7 lines 44 – 55). They are always contiguous address ranges. Romanov does not disclose or suggest the use of a group address capable of representing non-contiguous address ranges. Thus, Romanov fails to teach or suggest the Applicants’ claimed step of selecting at least one regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claim 1 and its dependent claim is in condition for allowance.

Independent claims 8, 15, and 16 include limitations similar to those set forth for claim 1. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claim 8 and its dependent claims 10 and 13, and claims 15 and 16 are in condition for allowance for the same reasons as set forth for claim 1.

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Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romanov in view of Ankney et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,113,499. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claim 2 depends from claim 1. Claim 1 is patentable over Romanov for reasons previously set forth. Ankney, like Romanov, fails to teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed step of selecting at least one regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges. Therefore, neither Romanov nor Ankney, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed invention. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romanov in view of Beser, U.S. Patent No. 6,189,102. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 is patentable over Romanov for reasons previously set forth. Beser, like Romanov, fails to teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed step of selecting at least one regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges. Therefore, neither Romanov nor

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Beser, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed invention. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claim 4 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 7, 11, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romanov in view of Beser and further in view of Belser et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,151,324. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 1 and 8 are patentable over Romanov for reasons previously set forth. Belser, like Romanov and Beser, fails to teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges. Thus, none of Romanov Beser, and Belser, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the Applicants' claimed invention. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claims 7, 11, and 14 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 6 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romanov in view of Peacock, U.S. Patent No. 6,381,650. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 1 and 8 are patentable over Romanov for reasons previously set forth. Peacock, like Romanov, fails to teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed regular expression character having a predetermined meaning which represents commonality between at least one character of each address in the plurality of addresses, wherein the regular expression character is chosen in accordance with a regular expression syntax capable of representing commonality within contiguous address ranges and non-contiguous address ranges. Thus, neither Romanov nor

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Peacock, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the Applicants' claimed invention. The Applicants therefore respectfully assert that claims 6 and 12 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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